



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Public Library

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Filmmaker Adele Horne to Screen Her Documentary Film “Tailenders” on May 21 at Central Library

SAN DIEGO – The City of San Diego Public Library will screen filmmaker Adele Horne’s film, “Tailenders,” on Sunday, May 21 at 2 p.m. in the third floor auditorium of the Central Library, located at 820 E St. in downtown San Diego. Horne will be present at the screening to answer questions.

Filmed in the Solomon Islands, Mexico, India and the United States, “The Tailenders” explores the connections between missionary activity and global capitalism. The film examines a missionary organization’s use of ultra-low-tech audio devices to evangelize indigenous communities facing crises caused by global economic forces.

Global Recordings Network, founded in Los Angeles in 1939, has produced audio versions of Bible stories in more than 5,500 languages, and aims to record in every language on earth. The company distributes the recordings, along with ultra-low-tech hand-wind players, in isolated regions and among displaced migrant workers. The Bible stories played by the missionaries are sometimes the first encounter community members have had with recorded sound, and, even more frequently, the first time they have heard their own language recorded. Gospel Recordings calls its target audience “The Tailenders” because they are the last to be reached by global evangelism.

The missionaries target communities in crisis because they have found that displaced and desperate people are especially receptive to the evangelical recordings. When uprooted from

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one’s home, as in the case of Mexican migrant workers, the sound of one’s own language is a comfort. And the audio players are appealing media gadgets. Audiences who might not otherwise be interested in the missionaries’ message will listen to the recordings.

The film raises questions about how people who receive the recordings understand them. Gospel Recording’s project is premised on a belief in the transparency of language to transmit a divinely inspired message. But because the missionaries don’t speak the languages, they must enlist bilingual native speakers as translators. There is ample opportunity for mistakes, selectivity and resistance in the translation.

This documentary explores how the messages and media introduced by the missionaries into remote communities play a role in larger socioeconomic transformations, and how meaning changes as it crosses language and culture.

For more information, call the Central Library at 619-236-5800 or visit the Library on the City’s Web site at <http://www.sandiego.gov/public-library>.

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